

Current Economic Programs Printed Survey Results: by the *New Mobile Home Placements* Statistics Users Respondent Base

U.S. Census Bureau
Current Economic Statistics User Survey

OMB CQM-26 (Rev.5/5/98)

I. DATA CONTENT

Your answers identifying the survey data you use will help us understand our users' patterns of data use.

1. Which Current Economic Statistics from the Census Bureau do you use? (Mark all that apply.)

(1) Monthly

0.0%;	0	None
57.7%;	60	Retail Sales
42.3%;	44	Wholesale Trade
43.3%;	45	Manufacturing/Trade Inventory/Sales
92.3%;	96	Housing Starts
88.5%;	92	Building Permits
86.5%;	90	New Home Sales
76.9%;	80	Value of New Construction Put in Place
75.0%;	78	Housing Completions
72.1%;	75	Expenditures for Residential Improvements
84.6%;	88	New Residential Construction
100.0%;	104	New Mobile Home Placements
42.3%;	44	Monthly Imports and Exports
41.3%;	43	Current Industrial Reports
43.3%;	45	Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories, Orders

Replies 104; Forms 104

(2) Quarterly

58.3%;	28	Quarterly Financial Report
81.2%;	39	Current Industrial Reports
12.5%;	6	Federal Assistance Awards Data System
27.1%;	13	Quarterly Tax Survey
14.6%;	7	Quarterly Public Employee Retirement

Replies 48; Forms 104

(3) Annual

50.0%;	47	Annual Retail Trade
44.7%;	42	Annual (Wholesale) Trade
23.4%;	22	Annual Survey of Communications
23.4%;	22	Transportation Annual Survey
25.5%;	24	Service Annual Survey
52.1%;	49	County Business Patterns

30.9%;	29	ZIP Code Business Patterns
26.6%;	25	Statistics of U.S. Businesses
67.0%;	63	Characteristics of New Housing
76.6%;	72	Annual Building Permits
59.6%;	56	New Residential Construction in Selected Metropolitan Areas
36.2%;	34	Annual Capital Expenditures
50.0%;	47	Annual Survey of Manufactures
42.6%;	40	Current Industrial Reports
17.0%;	16	Research and Development Survey
24.5%;	23	Plant Capacity Utilization
13.8%;	13	Education Finance Survey
20.2%;	19	State Tax Collection Survey
11.7%;	11	Annual Public Employee Retirement
16.0%;	15	Annual Survey of Public Employment
17.0%;	16	Consolidated Federal Funds Report
25.5%;	24	State Government Finances
38.3%;	36	Annual Imports and Exports

Replies 94; Forms 104

II. DATA DELIVERY

The Census Bureau is considering use of the Internet as the primary method of data delivery. By completing the following questions, you will help us retain the most essential delivery formats and design the best possible data delivery service.

(4) 2. How do you receive current economic data now? (Mark all that apply.)

89.3%;	92	Printed Publications	19.4%;	20	FAX
78.6%;	81	World Wide Web (Internet)	11.7%;	12	Direct (E-mail) delivery
34.0%;	35	CD-ROMs	8.7%;	9	Other
30.1%;	31	Diskettes			

Replies 103; Forms 104

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- Economic Bulletin Board
 - Electronic "Bulletin Boards"
 - Check values by telephone
 - also use microfiche in some cases.
 - time-share vendor (private)
 - Analytics
 - DRI DATABASE
 - Individual sources using census bureau data
 - Intermediate Data Vendor.3,4,6,
 - Subscribe to America Statistic Index on Microfiche
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(5) 3. What format do you PREFER when downloading data for further manipulation? (Mark all that apply.)

69.5%;	66	Spreadsheet (e.g., wkl, xls, etc...)
30.5%;	29	Database (e.g., dbf, mdb, etc...)
28.4%;	27	ASCII flat files
24.2%;	23	ASCII delimited
20.0%;	19	Retrieve from print or screen and enter manually
8.4%;	8	Do not manipulate data
1.1%;	1	Other

Replies 95; Forms 104

- TSO files
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4. What capabilities do you want on the Census Internet site? (For each line, indicate the degree of your preferences, from 5 [high] to 1 [low].)

(6) a. Direct (E-mail) delivery:

52.2%;	47	5	20.0%;	18	3	4.4%;	4	1
14.4%;	13	4	4.4%;	4	2	4.4%;	4	Don't know

Replies 90; Forms 104

(7) b. E-mail notification:

55.2%;	48	5	16.1%;	14	3	5.7%;	5	1
11.5%;	10	4	6.9%;	6	2	4.6%;	4	Don't know

Replies 87; Forms 104

(8) c. Retrieve/display to screen:

58.3%;	49	5	16.7%;	14	3	7.1%;	6	1
11.9%;	10	4	0.0%;	0	2	6.0%;	5	Don't know

Replies 84; Forms 104

(9) d. Search:

63.7%;	58	5	14.3%;	13	3	1.1%;	1	1
16.5%;	15	4	0.0%;	0	2	4.4%;	4	Don't know

Replies 91; Forms 104

(10) e. Download complete data sets:

74.7%;	68	5	8.8%;	8	3	1.1%;	1	1
12.1%;	11	4	0.0%;	0	2	3.3%;	3	Don't know

Replies 91; Forms 104

(11) f. Download selected data:

67.7%;	65	5	9.4%;	9	3	1.0%;	1	1
16.7%;	16	4	2.1%;	2	2	3.1%;	3	Don't know

Replies 96; Forms 104

(12) g. Software help/tutorials:

19.0%;	16	5	28.6%;	24	3	8.3%;	7	1
17.9%;	15	4	17.9%;	15	2	8.3%;	7	Don't know

Replies 84; Forms 104

(13) h. Publication-quality printing:

33.3%;	29	5	16.1%;	14	3	10.3%;	9	1
21.8%;	19	4	13.8%;	12	2	4.6%;	4	Don't know

Replies 87; Forms 104

(14) i. Charts and graphs:

29.2%;	26	5	25.8%;	23	3	9.0%;	8	1
12.4%;	11	4	18.0%;	16	2	5.6%;	5	Don't know

Replies 89; Forms 104

(15) j. Geographic maps:

29.4%;	25	5	12.9%;	11	3	10.6%;	9	1
23.5%;	20	4	16.5%;	14	2	7.1%;	6	Don't know

Replies 85; Forms 104

(16) k. Other, please specify:

66.7%;	4	electronic bulletin board	33.3%;	2	Other
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Replies 6; Forms 104

- Publications like QFR to be in spreadsheet format or mdb for easy data manipulation after downloading.
 - ACROBAT FILES, which you may include in item h.
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(17) l. Electronic Bulletin Board (To collect write-ins)

100.0%;	1	5	0.0%;	0	3	0.0%;	0	1
0.0%;	0	4	0.0%;	0	2	0.0%;	0	Don't know

Replies 1; Forms 104

III. DATA USAGE

Your answers describing how you use the data will help us design the most effective Current Economic Statistics retrieval tool.

(18) 5. Do you combine/compare/merge data from more than one source listed in Question 1?

19.4%;	19	No	80.6%;	79	Yes
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Replies 98; Forms 104

(19) 6. What time periods do you consider when using these data? (Mark X all that apply.)

67.0%;	65	5+ years	49.5%;	48	trends up to 1 year
58.8%;	57	trends up to 5 years	0.0%;	0	Other
52.6%;	51	latest 1 or 2 periods			

Replies 97; Forms 104

(20) 7. How do you use the data? (Mark all that apply.)

57.3%;	55	Create value-added products/services
40.6%;	39	Perform patron/client inquiries
31.2%;	30	Inform marketing decisions
24.0%;	23	Republish in newspaper/journal
21.9%;	21	Store reports/printouts for archival purposes
18.8%;	18	Inform investment decisions
9.4%;	9	Locate new sites
1.0%;	1	Other

Replies 96; Forms 104

- Store data in database.
-

(21) 8. What explanatory information do you consult when using these data? (Mark all that apply.)

81.6%;	80	Definition of terms
62.2%;	61	Sampling and estimation methodology
62.2%;	61	Narrative text describing survey results
43.9%;	43	Survey design
8.2%;	8	None
2.0%;	2	Other

Replies 98; Forms 104

- Direct contact with Census analysts
 - Comparisons to earlier surveys and/or similar data from other agencies--e.g. census to BEA in one estimates.
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(22) 9. Do you have any pressing data or information needs that are not currently being met?

- We are very much interested in unadjusted counterparts of tables 7 & 8 of the FT900 release being made available on internet on the day of release. Publications like QFR also need to be made available in spreadsheet or mdb for us to further manipulate data.
- No. Increasingly more and more data sets are becoming available electronically-which makes our work easier by eliminating manual inputting of data.
- Regional retail sales estimates (cancelled after 1996)
- Non-residential building permit data.
- State/MSA non-residential construction data!
- I do not receive all the requests all the time.
- Apartment (Multi-Family) Statistics.
- Information on nonresidential construction.
- Data on residential construction; alterations, renovations and conversions; and county level mobile home shipments.
- No.
- New remodeling data from American Housing Survey.
- Non-residential building permits--number by type of building.
- The availability of Residential and Commercial Building Permit Data.
- Accurate and timely international statistics on the air conditioning, refrigeration and heating industry.
- We use and would like to continue to use retail sales by county data and the merchandise line sales data.
- Int'l trade data on internet are inadequate. Only press releases are there. When data are revised, if data are not in the press release, there is no way to get the revisions (ex: monthly data from exhibits 6&7 of FT900).
- Number of Mobile Homes & Value of, by state, on a monthly basis. (Currently only published annually) -- Also, by county, if possible.

- Better capital expenditure data and Better motor vehicle data.
- More timely data.
- Data on non-residential construction.
- 1) NAICS to harmonized code concordance. 2) Timely plant capacity utilization at greatest detail level possible. 3) Windows version import data/monthly annual easy to use historical with full detail. 4) New Home sales (without land).
- Yes--Commercial building permits--Bring them back now!!!
- YES! Bring back non-residential state/local permits authorized! This was a severe loss for interpreting local economic trends. Also, more geographic detail, more frequently.
- 1). Employment in types of projects, such as residential construction. 2). Construction productivity measures.
- Better categorization of Import/Export information. It is very difficult to determine how much of some of our products were imported or exported.
- Housing stats and completions by state, MSA Value of construction put-in-place by state, MSA
- Place and regional economic data sets in relation to population/race trends.
- Website is extremely difficult to navigate.
- Non-residential permits!!
- Need more timely delivery of C-50 data (Res. Improvements). There is no contemporary measure of remodeling activity.
- Imports and exports by 4-digit SIC. Very important--in print. Publication form--quarterly.
- Non-residential new construction and renovation
- Permits for remodeling and non-residential construction.
- Data at the metropolitan area level, e.g. retail sales, commercial building permits (office, industrial, retail).
- We have a need for long historical time series and for long-term forecasts.
- Non-residential building permit data collection should be restored by state and metro area!
- Commercial building permits, Commercial real estates sales.
- As a foreign academic library, we are concerned about cost of access.
- Estimates of coverage by county for building permits better state and local data.
- Yes-I need non-residential construction series (commercial, industrial, etc.) on a geographic basis--as used to be done!
- Very disappointed that non-residential building permit data is no longer being tracked--our models rely on this!

IV. INDUSTRY CLASSIFICATION ISSUES

We will soon begin restructuring the Current Economic Surveys based on the new North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Your answers will help us ensure that these surveys continue to provide the economic information needed by markets, policy makers, and business people. For more information on NAICS, see the Bureau's web site: <http://www.census.gov/NAICS>.

(24) 10. At what levels of detail do you MOST FREQUENTLY USE industry data classified by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC)? (Mark all that apply.)

62.6%;	62	4-digit industries (or maximum detail I can get)
40.4%;	40	Sector totals (SIC division); e.g., Manufacturing or Retail Trade
37.4%;	37	2-digit major groups
35.4%;	35	3-digit industry groups
13.1%;	13	NA (don't use SIC-based data)
3.0%;	3	Other

Replies 99; Forms 104

- The greatest level available--CIR level. Product level.
- 7-digit
- 6-digit product data

(25) 11. Were you aware that the SIC system is being replaced by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)?

26.0%;	26	I was unaware of this
29.0%;	29	I am partially aware, but lack details
45.0%;	45	I am aware and understand some implications

Replies 100; Forms 104

12. Would you like to receive more information about NAICS?

(26) Yes, please send me - (Mark all that apply)

91.7%;	66	A brochure that explains NAICS	30.6%;	22	Conference announcements
56.9%;	41	NAICS implementation plans	1.4%;	1	Other

Replies 72; Forms 104

- I already have the CD
-

(27) No Thanks -

75.0%;	21	I will check the Census Bureau's web site (www.census.gov/naics)
25.0%;	7	I don't need more information about NAICS

Replies 28; Forms 104

V. USER PROFILE

Please tell us about yourself so we may serve you better.

(28) 13. Type of organization.

51.5%;	52	Business	3.0%;	3	Individual
21.8%;	22	Government	2.0%;	2	Media
11.9%;	12	Academic/Research	5.0%;	5	Other
5.0%;	5	Association			

Replies 101; Forms 104

- Information and consulting firm
 - Consulting
 - Building Material Manufacturer
 - Library (University)
 - Corp. Library
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(29) 14. Do you work in your organization's library?

15.0%;	15	Yes	85.0%;	85	No
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Replies 100; Forms 104

(30) 15. What is your affiliation with the Census Bureau?

80.6%;	79	None	2.0%;	2	Census Information Center
6.1%;	6	State Data Center	8.2%;	8	Other
3.1%;	3	Business/Industry Data Center			

- State Government Agency.
- Federal User
- Cooperator in disseminating permits authorized data
- Depository
- Affiliate Data Center
- GPO Depository
- Trade Association
- Consumer of housing data

(35) 20. May we contact you to follow up on this questionnaire?

84.4%; 81 Yes

15.6%; 15 No

Replies 96; Forms 104

(36) Question 21. Remarks:

- It would be nice to have all reports available in spreadsheets format. For any publication reports that contain large tables and data, mdb file format would be an ideal too.
- We greatly appreciate this survey. I'd like to stress one major concern we have: As you move toward complete Internet delivery of data--please continue to publish "hard copies" of the economic reports for us to compare as backup. We have noticed that occasionally there are errors in Electronic Bulletin Board and Internet files--so we rely on the hard copy as backup. We use it as a safeguard. Thank you and feel free to contact me at your convenience.
- A published paper version should always be made available for purchase to the public. Information being available on the internet is nice, yet it is a completely different animal than having a hard copy version of the information. An example: I can receive my new off the internet, but I still prefer to get my newspaper in the morning for reading at my leisure away from a computer.
- When is 1997 Census to be available? Please keep as much of the data in print as possible--Thanks!
- Census bureau data is always helpful--the data you provide enhances our publication and enables readers to make informal business decisions.
- --But please ask for Deborah Foster.

Thank you.

- You have set up an excellent web site that is easy to use, fast and usually supplies me with the information I'm seeking.
- Thank you for your great service!
- I prefer e-mail contacts rather than phone, as I am frequently not available at my phone for extended periods.
- We serve a varied clientele (academic, business, government, and private citizens) and work across many subject. Census data are absolutely vital to us. Our biggest need is for more geographic area detail more frequently (state, county, place, if possible). Users often do not understand the 5 yr. gaps and lag time for the major Economic Surveys that offer such detail, much less the 10 yr. decennial cycle. The internet is a great help in speeding "publication", but we find access is not yet universal. We still download and print entire documents for guide reference and historical purposes. I am concerned about just how long the electronic medi will remain accurate and usable as technology changes. How will the Bureau deal with these problems?
- Sorry for the delay--the survey didn't arrive until 8/12/98.
- I think that this user survey is an excellent idea; you should poll users periodically.

I would be happy to participate in a users' panel or advisory group.

- We look forward to working with you on the upcoming Census.
- I find the Census Website to be fairly difficult to use. It's hard to find information that I need. For

- example: I was trying to find tables on the number of Households & spent probably 45 minutes locating it.
- We love the Census Bureau! Clear publications indices and ease of search engines on the Internet site are very important to us. Also, choice of how to download data is good, not all users need or can use spreadsheet software.
- Keep up the good work.
- It was a mistake to exclude mobile home permits from your residential permits totals, and a bigger mistake to exclude the non-residential permits.
- Glad more of your publications are being made available on the Internet! Suggestion for format of employment data-group by years first, then industry. Is there some alternative for obtaining non-residential building permits.

Figure 1: